



Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control

*The Mission of the  
Department of  
Toxic Substances  
Control is to  
provide the highest  
level of safety, and  
to protect public  
health and the  
environment from  
toxic harm.*



State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency

## Project Overview, October 2010

# PG&E Former Manufactured Gas Plants San Francisco Marina District



*View of the San Francisco Marina District in 1896. On the right  
are the holding tanks of the two Manufactured Gas Plants.*

## Introduction

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA), Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) is the regulatory agency providing oversight of the investigations and, if necessary, any cleanup activities at the location of two historical Manufactured Gas Plants (MGPs) formerly operated by Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) in what is now San Francisco's Marina District.

DTSC is issuing this project overview to provide the community with information regarding the environmental survey being conducted by PG&E related to these historic MGPs and DTSC's regulatory oversight role.

Over the next several months PG&E, with oversight from DTSC, will be collecting soil samples from private properties where owners have voluntarily granted access and on public rights-of-way (with approval from the City and County of San Francisco), such as sidewalks. The goal of PG&E's program is to find out if MGP-related residues are present in soil and, if so, to determine if such residues could have adverse impacts on the health of the community. As soon as these investigations are completed, a draft cleanup plan will be prepared, if needed.

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#### Help us save the environment and go green!

You can receive project information updates via email. Please send Wayne Hagen, DTSC Public Participation Specialist, your request to be added to the San Francisco MGP project list via email at: [WHagen@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:WHagen@dtsc.ca.gov).



## Site History

Manufactured Gas Plants, also known as MGPs, were located in cities and towns across the country to produce gas for lighting, heating and cooking from the mid 1800s through the early 1900s. PG&E operated two MGPs in the Marina District of San Francisco. Beginning in 1883, the Fillmore MGP operated near the area west of Fillmore and Bay streets. Beginning in 1891, the North Beach MGP operated near the area north of Bay and Buchanan streets. PG&E was formed in October 1905 and operated the gas plants for six months until April 1906, when they were destroyed in the Great Earthquake. The Fillmore MGP was located in the area that later served as the site of the Pan Pacific International Exposition in 1915. Residential development began in the area during the late 1920s.

In the early 1990s, under DTSC oversight, PG&E conducted sampling at its Marina Substation property, which lies within the footprint of the former North Beach MGP site. This study found possible MGP-related chemicals, and DTSC recommended further investigation. However, based on site conditions (i.e., pavement and buildings capping soil, etc.) and scientific knowledge about these chemicals and their properties at the time, DTSC determined that people in the area were not being exposed to any harmful MGP-related residues.

## Regulatory Oversight

PG&E has a voluntary program to investigate and, where necessary, clean up former MGP sites that the company owned or operated. DTSC oversees PG&E's former MGP program in the San Francisco Marina District and has experience with former MGP sites throughout the state. Based on DTSC's experience – and under current conditions – DTSC does not believe that Marina area residents or visitors have been exposed to harmful levels of contaminants that may have been left behind from these former MGP operations.

Earlier this year, PG&E entered into a Voluntary Cleanup Agreement with DTSC, which will oversee the investigations and, if necessary, any cleanup activities at the former MGP sites in the San Francisco Marina area. As part of its regulatory oversight, DTSC will:

- Review and provide written comments on all project documents;
- Provide oversight of field activities, including sampling and any needed cleanup activities;
- Make certain that all necessary safeguards and protective measures are taken throughout the entire investigation and any cleanup processes;
- Ensure that all work is performed in accordance with applicable local, state and federal statutes, regulations, ordinances, rules and guidance documents;

- Ensure that the community will be notified in advance of any field work activities;
- Conduct community outreach and involvement activities and respond to community concerns and/or questions; and
- Provide access to project documents on DTSC's website and at information repositories.

In the event that DTSC determines that any activity or condition related to this program represents a threat to the health and safety of the community, DTSC has the authority to direct corrective measures.

## Preliminary Investigations

DTSC is reviewing sampling work plans for investigations on both private and public properties in the area. These work plans are expected to be implemented later this year upon approval from DTSC and represent the primary focus of PG&E's investigation. In the meantime, PG&E has recently undertaken two preliminary investigations for the purpose of gathering information for use in guiding future sampling work.

**Junction Box Sampling:** In March 2010, under DTSC oversight, PG&E collected soil vapor samples from nine junction boxes that are owned by PG&E in the Marina District. The purpose of the study was to provide preliminary information on the possible presence of contamination in the soil vapor that could affect air quality inside buildings and to help determine if additional investigations are needed.

Naphthalene, which is commonly found at MGP sites, was detected at two of the nine locations sampled. Naphthalene is also associated with petroleum products so there are several other sources that could contribute to the presence of this chemical in the area.

In one of the locations, the level of naphthalene was above the Cal/EPA screening level. The Cal/EPA screening levels represent concentrations that are protective of public health and are used to help determine whether additional



*Closed Junction Box*





*Locations of Former Marina MGPs*

investigation may be needed. The level at the other location where naphthalene was detected was below the screening level.

Tetrachloroethene (PCE), a common solvent used by dry cleaners, was found in eight of the samples, two of which were above Cal/EPA screening levels. PCE was not commercially available in the U.S. until the 1920s, nor was it used as a part of the manufacturing process of the former MGPs.

Due to the limited amount of data collected as part of the junction box sampling and the fact that the conduits running between the boxes may act as pathways for vapors, these results do not provide a reliable measure of potential exposures.

**Alhambra Street Sewer Sampling:** In late July, PG&E obtained permission from the City and County of San Francisco to collect soil samples from a sewer line repair work site on Alhambra Street. Soil samples were collected from depths of 3 feet, 6 feet and 8 feet. These sampling activities were not performed under DTSC oversight; however, the results were forwarded to DTSC. The results showed no evidence of leftover residues from the former MGPs.

The information gathered from the Junction Box and Alhambra Street sampling effort will be added to the information gained through a review of historical records, soil samples collected by PG&E in the area in the 1980s and 1990s, and the data still to be collected from the investigation of private and public properties in the area to create a comprehensive picture of soil and soil vapor conditions in the area.

### **DTSC Outreach Activities**

DTSC values community input and wants to make sure the public is aware of sampling and/or cleanup activities in their neighborhood and is able to participate in the process. Since February 2010, DTSC has participated in several meetings with neighbors and community stakeholders regarding the program. In April 2010, DTSC mailed a survey to approximately 5,000 Marina District residents and business owners. In September 2010, DTSC conducted interviews with key stakeholders and community members who responded to the survey to ensure community concerns and interests are incorporated into DTSC's community outreach strategy.

DTSC is currently developing a Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the sites, which will present DTSC's approach

for involving and communicating with the community. The PPP will include outreach activities such as:

- Email updates, work notices, fact sheets, and public notices to the community at key project milestones;
- Availability of documents for public review in the information repositories and on DTSC's website;
- Public meetings, as necessary; and
- Meetings with community members.

## Next Steps

During the next few months, DTSC anticipates the following will occur:

- Additional sampling workplans submitted by PG&E will be reviewed and implemented when approved by DTSC;
- PG&E will continue, under DTSC's oversight, to seek access to conduct sampling activities on private properties;
- PG&E, under DTSC's oversight, will perform sampling activities at individual properties; and
- DTSC will continue public involvement and outreach activities including public meetings as appropriate.

## Where to Find Site Documents

To encourage community review and input, DTSC has established the following Information Repositories for these sites and other means to access site documents.

### Information Repositories

DTSC File Room  
700 Heinz Avenue  
Berkeley, California 94710  
(510) 540-3833

Marina Branch Library  
1890 Chestnut Street  
San Francisco, California 94123  
(415) 355-2823

### EnviroStor

You can also view the San Francisco Marina District MGP Site documents, including a copy of the *Junction Box Soil Vapor Screening Technical Memorandum*, on DTSC's EnviroStor database at:

<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov/public/>

Type in "San Francisco" in the "city" data field, then scroll down and select "PG&E Former Fillmore Manufactured Gas Plant" or "PG&E Former North Beach Manufactured Gas Plant." Click the "Community Involvement" button to view public participation documents.

To learn more about DTSC, please visit our website at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov).

All documents made available to the public by DTSC can be accessed in alternate formats (i.e., Braille, large print, etc.) or in another language, as appropriate, in accordance with State and Federal law. Please contact Wayne Hagen at the phone number or email address listed below for assistance.

## For More Information:

For questions about site investigations, please contact:

Allan Fone  
DTSC Project Manager  
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[AFone@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:AFone@dtsc.ca.gov)

For questions regarding the public participation process, please contact:

Wayne Hagen  
DTSC Public Participation Specialist  
(510) 540-3911 or (866) 495-5651  
TTY/TDD/STS users dial 711  
(for the California Relay Service)  
[WHagen@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:WHagen@dtsc.ca.gov)

For media questions, please contact:

Charlotte Fadipe  
DTSC Communication and Outreach  
(916) 323-3395  
[CFadipe@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:CFadipe@dtsc.ca.gov)

## Anuncio

Si **prefiere** hablar con alguien en español acerca de **ésta** información, favor de llamar a Jacinto Soto, Departamento de Control de Substancias Tóxicas. El número de teléfono es (510) 540-3842

如閣下對此清理計劃有疑問，請致電DTSC 職員 Henry Wong 黃先生，(510) 540-3770.